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Chapter 2: The Self in Human Relations

Chapter Overview

This chapter describes the myths of self-esteem and describes the three elements of the self. It also discusses two processes that inherently skew our self-perceptions: self-verification and self-enhancement. Finally, this chapter describes the way we process incoming information about our self.

Learning Objectives

- Explain the purpose of self-concept
- Describe two strategies used to maintain positive self-concept
- Determine cultural similarities and differences in self-concept
- Describe the purpose of possible selves
- Compare self-esteem to self-concept
- Explain the functions of self-esteem
- Distinguish 'unconditional positive regard' from 'conditional positive regard' in developing self-esteem
- Determine what self-esteem can or cannot support
- Explain the stability and fluctuation of self-esteem
- Describe how culture can influence self-esteem
- Explain how self-efficacy differs from self-concept and self-esteem
- Summarize the benefits of self-efficacy
- Describe the importance of the "sweet spot" in developing self-efficacy
- Explain how culture influences self-efficacy
- Describe the four pathways to self-knowledge
- Explain how to use social comparison to improve self-knowledge
- Determine cautions when discussing observations and ideas with others
- Describe how Johari Windows give us insight into ourselves and our relationships
- Explain how to increase mindfulness to build self-knowledge
- Distinguish between the private self and the public self
- Compare the advantages and disadvantages of self-monitoring
- Analyze the research on 'self-presentation on Facebook'
- Analyze the similarities and differences among the theories of adult development
- Explain the crisis in each of Erikson's stages of adulthood
- Determine Levinson's major contribution to the understanding of adulthood
- Analyze Sheehy's contributions to the understanding of adult development
- Explain Arnett's contributions to the understanding of early adult development.

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Key Terms and Concepts

Self	Private self
Self-concept	Public self
Self-verification	Self-monitoring
Self-enhancement	Intimacy vs. isolation
Possible selves	Generativity vs. stagnation
Self-esteem	Integrity vs. despair
Sociometer theory	Early adult transition
Positive regard	Age 30 transition
Unconditional positive regard	Midlife crisis
Conditional positive regard	Cohort
Trait self-esteem	Tryout twenties
State self-esteem	Turbulent thirties
Self-efficacy	
Self-knowledge	Middlescence
Social comparison	Age of mastery
Self-perception	Flaming fifties
Johari Window	Serene sixties
Identity	Sage seventies

Chapter Outline

I. The First Steps: Defining and Understanding the Self
   A. Overview
      1. Who are you?
         a. Learning effective interaction begins with self-exploration.
         b. **SELF** is the sum total of who and what we are, both consciously and unconsciously.
            1) Self varies from person to person and changes with experience and efforts
            2) Three basic psychological frameworks to understand self: self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy.
      2. Activity 2.1: The Twenty Statements Test includes listing of 20 "I am ____" statements, reflections on answers, and consideration of self if three statements were arbitrarily removed. The TST is a longstanding psychological and social psychological "test" for use in gaining insight into one's "sense of self." In particular, it helps identify those self-descriptions that may be due more to a person's "roles" than who he or she really is or could be.
      3. Preview Questions
         a. What is our self-concept, and what purpose does it serve? How is it influenced by culture?
         b. What is self-esteem, and what are its functions?

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c. How does self-esteem develop, and to what extent does it change over time? How powerful is it?
d. What is self-efficacy, and what benefits does it provide?

B. SELF-CONCEPT is the relatively stable set of perceptions you have about yourself.

1. Overview
   a. Self-concept is the *cognitive* component of self.
   b. See Figure 2.1: Example of Self-Concept.
   c. Think about responses to Activity 2.1: The Twenty Statements Test. Words used to describe self typically reflect self-concept.
2. Functions of self-concept
   a. Self-concept serves as interpreter and organizer of information about self in two ways: self-verification and self-enhancement.
   b. **SELF-VERIFICATION** is the human tendency to seek out and retain information that confirms or verifies our self-concept.
      1) Swann (1997) suggests constancy in self-concept provides stability to aid in confidence related to self-judgments and assessments.
      2) The need for constancy can also cause rejection of new insights about self that may contradict older information.
   c. **SELF-ENHANCEMENT** is the basic human need to feel good about ourselves.
      1) Humans have a strong tendency to develop and maintain a positive sense of self by gravitating toward environments that support positive evaluations and avoiding environments that promote negative self-feelings.
      2) Humans use best and/or strongest personal qualities when making comparison with others, resulting in fairly favorable comparisons (for self but not always for others!)
3. Possible selves
   a. **POSSIBLE SELVES** refer to visions, both positive and negative, of who and what we might become someday (Markus & Nurius, 1986).
      1) "What do you want to do when you grow up?"
      2) Possible selves motivate us toward fondest dreams and away from greatest fears.
      3) Possible selves provide a "blueprint" for the future (Ruvolo & Markus, 1992).
   b. *Critical Thinking Question: What are some of your possible selves? Identify at least one positive possible self and one negative possible self. How do these possible selves influence your behavior?*
4. Culture and self-concept
   a. Culture has significant impact on self-concept.

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b. See Figure 2.2: The Self in Individualist and Collectivist Cultures.
    1) Individualists have self-concepts and values that center on independence and rely on personality traits for self-descriptions.
    2) Collectivists have self-concepts and values that focus primarily on interdependence with others from their social groups, place high value on the ability to develop and maintain harmonious relationships, and rely on context-specific information for self-descriptions.
c. Cultural differences such as these play a role in the actual function of self-concept.
    1) Self-concept has a self-enhancement function for individualists; collectivists value self-improvement over self-enhancement.
    2) Self-concept functions to **improve** self for collectivists and to **enhance** self for individualists.

C. Self-Esteem
1. Overview
    a. **SELF-ESTEEM** refers to how we feel about ourselves, or the degree to which we are satisfied with our self-concept.
    b. Self-esteem is the *emotional* component of self.
    c. See Figure 2.3: The Self-Esteem Continuum.
        1) Self-esteem is continuum with positive and negative at polar ends.
        2) Some psychologists characterize self-esteem as difference between self-concept and *ideal self.*
2. Functions of Self-Esteem
    a. Self-esteem provides feedback about sense of belonging and sense of meaningfulness.
    b. Sense of belonging is explained by sociometer theory.
        1) **SOCIOMETER THEORY** posits that self-esteem acts as a gauge that measures the level of acceptance a person feels from his or her social environment (Leary et al., 1995).
        2) People have a set of sociometers that provide feedback (in the form of self-esteem) about effectiveness of social group relationships.
    c. Self-esteem also measures sense of meaning in life (Brown, 1998).
        1) Meaning is gained when a person is fully immersed in and enjoying a life task.
        2) The sociometer sends information about positive and effective relationships through the mechanism of positive self-esteem and information about difficult and strained relationships through the mechanism of lower self-esteem.

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3) Task outcome (specifically if it is successful or not) is less relevant than positive feelings engendered within the process.
4) *Critical Thinking Questions: Think about your most important relationships and how well they are currently functioning. If they are functioning well, is your self-esteem also fairly positive? If they are experiencing difficulties, have you noticed your self-esteem being negatively affected? Overall, does the sociometer theory seem to explain your current level of self-esteem?*

3. Development of Self-Esteem
   a. Self-esteem is strongly influenced by feedback from others.
   b. Signals about a person's goodness or badness are received very early in life. Carl Rogers called this *positive regard* and noted two types (*unconditional positive regard* and *conditional positive regard*).
      1) **POSITIVE REGARD** refers to positive feedback, good feelings, and acceptance.
      2) **UNCONDITIONAL POSITIVE REGARD** refers to giving positive regard and acceptance at all times and in all situations.
         1) Unconditional positive regard is unconditional love wherein behavior is separated from the person.
         2) Children who receive unconditional positive regard develop positive self-esteem.
      3) **CONDITIONAL POSTIVE REGARD** refers to giving positive regard and acceptance only in certain conditions.
         1) Unconditional positive regard conveys that a child is no longer worthy of love when unacceptable behavior occurs.
         2) Children develop a sense of hopelessness and of being a "bad" person. Lower self-esteem occurs.
      4) What happens as people age?
         1) Significant others (e.g., peers, authority figures) continue to contribute to self-esteem.
         2) Power over self-esteem is related to value placed on the personal opinion of another.
         3) Power over self-esteem of others is reciprocal.
         4) "Ego boosters" and "ego busters" are signals sent to others that influence their self-esteem.
         5) See Activity 2.2: Self-Esteem and Its Influence on Your Relationships.

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4. What Self-Esteem Can and Cannot Do
    a. Self-esteem **can** promote happiness, increase persistence, and facilitate speaking in a group.
    b. Self-esteem **does not** automatically lead to better school performance, influence relationship success, or cause violence.
    c. See Figure 2.4: Sociometer Theory.
        1) These findings suggest that honesty is more important than false positive information in helping people improve their lives.
5. *Critical Thinking Question: Can you recall a specific time when you thought someone was giving you feedback that was overly positive, possibly in an attempt to make you feel better about yourself? How effective was it? Did it actually boost your self-esteem? If not, what effect did it have?*
6. Is a person's self-esteem stable over time? Research provides conflicting findings.
    a. Some studies demonstrate that self-esteem fluctuates in childhood, becomes more stable throughout adolescence, and remains relatively stable for the rest of life (Trzesniewski and colleagues, 2003).
    b. Other studies suggest that praise or success on a difficult task raises self-esteem; failure lowers it.
7. Could this be related to different types of self-esteem?
    a. **TRAIT SELF-ESTEEM** refers to an individual's general pattern of self-esteem over a lifetime. This is a baseline level or internal "set point."
    b. **STATE SELF-ESTEEM** refers to the type of self-esteem which is vulnerable to momentary fluctuations. This fluctuates up or down, but returns to a baseline self-esteem.
    c. Alternatively, a variety of possible selves may contribute to the stability of self-esteem.
8. Culture and Self-Esteem
    a. Values play a critical role in a person's self-esteem. They dictate what is personally important.
        1) culture→values→behavior→self-esteem
    b. For individualists, the path to self-esteem is related to personal achievement, independent thinking, and being true to oneself.
    c. For collectivists, self-esteem is achieved by thinking and acting in ways that support one's social group.
    d. For both cultures, positive self-esteem is derived from behavior that supports cultural norms.

D. Self-Efficacy: Where Self-Concept and Self-Esteem Intersect
    1. Overview

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a. **SELF-EFFICACY** is the extent to which we believe we are capable of achieving our goals.
b. Self-efficacy is the third psychological concept to help understand self.

2. Benefits of Self-Efficacy
   a. High self-efficacy contributes to better grades and achievement of academic goals (Kitsantas and Zimmerman, 2009); and positively affects physical and mental health (e.g., lower levels of depression, greater success at weight loss and smoking cessation).
3. How Does Self-Efficacy Develop?
   a. Self-efficacy begins to develop in childhood and continues to be influenced by life experiences.
   b. Goal achievement is best achieved by helping children set high, but attainable, goals. This is the basic principle of self-efficacy in action.
   c. Self-efficacy can also be raised at any other point in life by following this action.
4. Culture and Self-Efficacy
   a. There are differences in cultural group self-efficacy.
   b. Self-efficacy is more highly valued in individualistic cultures than in collectivistic cultures.
      1) Individualistic cultures perceive self primarily as an independent being. They view self-efficacy as an important goal, achieved by mastery which results from successful control or influence over a situation or group.
      2) Collectivistic cultures view as an interdependent being. Social situations are perceived as opportunities to develop or strengthen relationships wherein conformity strengthens group solidarity and harmony. Self-efficacy is less important.
   c. Uncertainty avoidance also influences self-efficacy.
      1) Low uncertainty avoidance cultures feel less threatened by change and more personally able to influence life outcomes. This affects self-efficacy.
      2) High uncertainty avoidance cultures feel less control and optimism about academic abilities.
   d. See Figure 2.8: Key Elements of the Self for diagrammatic review of the elements of self.
   e. *Critical Thinking Question: Identify at least one area in which you have high self-efficacy and another in which you have lower self-efficacy. What is one specific thing you could do to improve your self-efficacy in your low area?*

II. Developing Self-Knowledge

A. Preview Questions

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1. What is self-knowledge, and how is it important?
2. Describe four ways self-knowledge can be improved. Give an example of each.

B. What Is Self-Knowledge?
   1. **SELF-KNOWLEDGE** is the conscious knowledge you have about your motivations, beliefs, expectations, values, strengths, and weaknesses.
   2. Can you think of an example that illustrates your own self-knowledge?
   3. Development of self-knowledge involves ongoing commitment to examine self-concept accuracy. This accuracy is influenced by personal perceptions about oneself.
   4. Perceptions are influenced by many factors, including such things as social comparison, self-perception, discussion of observations and ideas with others, and the Johari Window.

C. What Is Social Comparison?
   1. **SOCIAL COMPARISON** involves evaluating yourself based on how you think you compare to others.
      a. Social reality testing involves making **social comparisons** with others in order to learn about the world and about the self within it, and thereby reduces uncertainty.
      b. Social comparisons are more likely when people are uncertain.
      c. People compare themselves with **similar** others in order to determine what is correct, appropriate and desirable.
      d. Social reality testing creates conformity pressures because people seek to reduce disagreement between themselves and similar others.
   2. Culture and Social Comparison
      a. Collectivists engage in social comparison more often than individualists and are more likely to make upward comparisons to benefit the entire group.
      b. Individualists engage in social comparisons less than collectivists and are more likely to make downward comparisons, and judge themselves favorably as they strive toward personal excellence.
   3. See Activity 2.3: Free Association and the Unknown.

D. How Is Discussing Observations and Ideas with Others Useful?
   1. Putting things into words increases specificity and deepens awareness of ideas.
   2. Discussing with others provides feedback to help compare self-observations with those of others.
   3. Distorted feedback and subsequent distortions in self-concept can occur if feedback is inaccurate, incomplete, or obsolete. This is especially true if it comes from a trusted source.

E. *Critical Thinking Question: Consider the feedback you have recently received from others, either in your personal life or at work. Are you aware of any*

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distorted or obsolete information that you may not have noticed at the time? If so, do you need to modify your self-concept to compensate for the distortion?

F. What Is the Johari Window?
   1. **JOHARI WINDOW** is a visual representation of the parts of yourself that are known to you and known to others.
   2. The Johari Window was named for its creators: Joe Luft and Harry Ingham = Johari. It has four areas. See Figure 2.12: The Johari Window.
      a. *Open area:* represents all that you know about yourself that is also known by others.
      b. *Hidden area:* represents all that you know about yourself that is private and not known to others.
      c. *Blind area:* represents that part of yourself that others can see, but that you are not aware of.
      d. *Unknown area:* represents the part of yourself that is hidden from others and also hidden from yourself.
   3. Our Johari Window varies from relationship to relationship.
      a. See Figure 2.13: The Johari Window in a Close Relationship and Figure 2.14: The Johari Window Early in a Relationship.
      b. The Johari Window also can be used to evaluate awareness of the general degree of openness with people. As relationships develop, the Open area typically grows, and people learn more about themselves by listening to feedback from others. This reduces the size of the Blind area.
      c. Ignoring or rejecting feedback from others can cause difficulty in reducing one's blind area. See Activity 2.3: Free Association and the Unknown.

III. Self-Presentation: How (and How Much) We Show Ourselves to Others

A. Preview Questions
   1. What is the difference between our public and private selves?
   2. What is self-monitoring? In what ways is self-monitoring beneficial, and how can it hinder our relations with others?

B. The Public Self and the Private Self
   1. **PRIVATE SELF** refers to the part of our self that is known only to us.
   2. **PUBLIC SELF** refers to the image we present to the world.
   3. See Activity 2.5: Life Stages and the Adults in Your Life to determine the degree to which you engage in self-monitoring.

C. What Is Self-Monitoring?
   1. **SELF-MONITORING** occurs when we utilize different parts of our self, or different public selves, in different situations.
   2. High self-monitors adjust to situations more easily and are more socially skilled. They may have less intimate social relationships and in individualistic cultures may judge others more superficially.

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3. Low self-monitors act in ways more consistent with their true thoughts and are less interested in "fitting in" or presenting the "proper image." They may appear insensitive or stubborn.
4. Self-monitoring scores tend to *decrease* with age.
5. *Critical Thinking Question: What reason can you think of that might explain the relationship between age and self-monitoring?*
6. Cross culture research indicates differences between individualists and collectivists. Mental processes contribute to differences.
    a. Individualists are more likely to self-monitor, typically imagine what a prototypical person would ideally do in a situation, and adjust behavior to fit that image.
    b. Collectivists have context-specific self-concepts and are typically low self-monitors who think about what they usually do in a particular situation and act accordingly.

IV. The Self Throughout Adulthood

A. Preview Questions

1. According to Erikson, what three challenges do adults face as they progress through their lives? What is the key to resolving each challenge successfully?
2. What did Levinson's work contribute to our understanding of adult life stages?
3. How did Sheehy conceptualize adulthood, and what are the stages of adult life in her model?

B. How does life stage affect development in adulthood?

1. Life stage influences behaviors, goals, and reactions to others.
2. Three researchers investigated adult life stages: Erikson, Levinson, and Sheehy.

C. Erikson's Theory

1. Erikson was the first theorist to span the entire life cycle in the context of eight distinct stages.
    a. See Figure 2.1: Example of Self-Concept.
    b. Adulthood was conceptualized as a dynamic period full of change that was grounded in conflict.
    c. Development involves facing a particular crisis. If crisis is met, the next stage could be mastered more successfully.
    d. Critics suggest that Erikson's theory is based solely on clinical observations.
2. Stage One of Adult Development: Intimacy vs. Isolation
    a. **INTIMACY VS. ISOLATION**: Erikson's first stage of adult development, which is to establish and maintain an intimate relationship with a life partner.
    b. This stage is preceded by the challenges of adolescence, primarily establishing an identity. **IDENTITY** is the unique sense of self which requires individuating from the family.

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c. Intimacy vs. isolation requires both physical and emotional closeness and honesty and trust.

3. Stage Two of Adult Development: Generativity vs. Stagnation
   a. **GENERATIVITY VS. STAGNATION**: Erikson's second stage of adult development, which is to nurture the next generation, or to raise children in a way that helps them master their environments and establish their own identities.
   b. This stage follows naturally from the preceding and involves caring for younger ones in some way.
   c. Adults who do not contribute to the next generation experience frustration and a lack of fulfillment.
4. Stage Three of Adult Development: Integrity vs. Despair
   a. **INTEGRITY VS. DESPAIR**: Erikson's third stage of adult development, which is the challenge of looking back on one's life and feeling a sense of satisfaction at a life well-lived.
   b. People who feel integrity are confident that choices throughout life were consistent with their identity and values. Despair emerges if a person reflects back and sees their life as a series of missed opportunities.

D. Levinson's Theory
1. Levinson and colleagues conducted the first empirical research in the area of men's adult development (see *The Seasons of a Man's Life, 1978)* and concluded that a man's life was comprised of stable periods interspersed with transitional periods. This theory is grounded in conflict or crisis and limited by its small, exclusively male sample.
2. In the transitional period, men contemplated recent stable periods, explored what should come next, and prepared to move ahead.
   a. **EARLY ADULT TRANSITION**: According to Levinson, completion of the major task of adolescence—forming an identity—and working toward becoming an independent, self-reliant person. This transition is complete when a man commits himself to a place in the world (e.g., job, life partner), usually in the early 20s with seven to eight years of relative stability.
   b. **AGE 30 TRANSTION**: According to Levinson, a period of four to five years when a man questions the choices he has made so far, considering what modifications he might make to build a more stable and fulfilled life. This period lasts four to five years and is followed by another stable period wherein a man settles down and strengthens the commitments he has made.
   c. **MIDLIFE TRANSITION** is a period of reflection and questioning regarding the life choices made so far. In addition to the questioning, there is an increased awareness of mortality and a sense of urgency as life dreams are compared with accomplishments.

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E. Sheehy's Theory
    1. Overview
        a. Sheehy's theory recognizes the role of age in life stages, but posits that cultural and societal environment interacts with age to produce unique goals and interests for different cohorts at the same chronological age.
        b. **COHORT** is a group of people born about the same time in history, so they share common experiences in society at about the same time and age.
            1) **"**The playing field is quite different for each generation when its young members start their journey into adulthood."
            2) Proliferation of technology, relative peace, and advances in medicine has produced revolutionary changes in the adult life cycle.
        c. *Critical Thinking Question: Think about your own generation as a cohort. What cultural or societal events or conditions have been influential in your overall worldviews, beliefs, and ideals as a cohort? What is your prediction about how these forces will influence the choices and directions your cohort makes as you collectively progress through your lifespan?*
    2. Sheehy's Stages. See Table 2.3 (Sheehy's Life Stages).
        a. Early/First Adulthood
            1) **TRYOUT TWENTIES** are characterized by a feeling of freedom to "try out" different roles in life, both occupationally and in close relationships and termed "Provisional Adulthood." Young adults recognize there are many choices and many dangers in life which may result in less secure feelings about the future. There is a heightened awareness of AIDS, environmental issues, and interracial violence.
            2) **TURBULENT THIRTIES** are characterized by a time in which young adults are juggling multiple roles, often including raising children, building a career, and maintaining an intimate relationship with a partner and termed "First Adulthood." Young adults may be tempted by materialism and, more than any other period, are responsible for successfully managing multiple roles.
            3) **FLOURISHING FORTIES** are characterized by the recognition that 40 doesn't feel old, which prompts middlescence. These young adults resist the notion that they are aging and at the end of the period they slowly begin to realize their mortality, prompting a reassessment of lived lives.

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4) **MIDDLESCENCE** is a time of reflection on life so far and reassessment of goals, values, and identity and signals the transition from First Adulthood to Second Adulthood. Giving up dreams may provoke a *meaning crisis* in which adults are forced to reassess achieved and hoped for accomplishments.

b. Middle/Second Adulthood
   1) **AGE OF MASTERY** is characterized by renewed vigor and purpose from about ages 45-65. New goals revolve around missing parts of previous life or "finding the passion and pursuing it".
   2) **FLAMING FIFTIES** is characterized by a time to build on and enjoy pursuit of the new goals set during middlescence. Women often experience a growth in self-confidence, while men may feel less supported. Negativity is overcome with new optimism for the future and changing the focus from *competing to connecting*.
   3) *Critical Thinking Question: As you read about these stages of Sheehy's model, do you notice any similarities to Levinson's model? Explain.*
   4) **SERENE SIXTIES** are characterized by a sense of inner harmony, usually a result of living in a manner consistent with one's ideal self. This group of adults feels younger, experiences greater physical and economic well-being, and seeks out restorative or healing experiences. Sheehy calls this the Age of Integrity.

c. Late Adulthood
   1) **SAGE SEVENTIES** include successful 70-somethings who stay mentally and physically in shape and continue to find missions in life. Early life experiences included a series of missions, and this mind set continues.
   2) **ELEGANT EIGHTIES** are characterized by direct expression of thoughts, opinions, and feelings as if there is no reason to hold back.
   3) **NOBLE NINETIES** are seen as a time of generosity of mind and spirit and the ability to forgive.
   4) **CELEBRATORY CENTENARIANS** are typically mentally active and engaged in life, optimistic, and have a good sense of humor. Sheehy contends that life for these adults seems to have been a great adventure.

F. See Activity 2.5: Life Stages and the Adults in Your Life to review which life stage theory best explains four adults in your life.

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Preview Questions

The First Steps: Defining and Understanding the Self

1. What is our self-concept, and what purpose does it serve? How is it influenced by culture?
2. What is self-esteem, and what are its functions?
3. How does self-esteem develop, and to what extent does it change over time? How powerful is it?
4. What is self-efficacy, and what benefits does it provide?

Developing Self-Knowledge

1. What is self-knowledge, and how is it important?
2. Describe four ways self-knowledge can be improved. Give an example of each.

Self-Presentation: How (And How Much) We Show Ourselves to Others

1. What is the difference between our public and private selves?
2. What is self-monitoring? In what ways is self-monitoring beneficial, and how can it hinder our relations with others?

The Self Throughout Adulthood

1. According to Erikson, what three challenges do adults face as they progress through their lives? What is the key to resolving each challenge successfully?
2. What did Levinson's work contribute to our understanding of adult life stages?
3. How did Sheehy conceptualize adulthood, and what are the stages of adult life in her model?

Critical Thinking QUESTIONS

The First Steps: Defining and Understanding Self

1. What are some of your possible selves? Identify at least one positive possible self and one negative possible self. How do these possible selves influence your behavior?
2. Think about your most important relationships and how well they are currently functioning. If they are functioning well, is your self-esteem also fairly positive? If they are experiencing difficulties, have you noticed your self-esteem being negatively affected? Overall, does the sociometer theory seem to explain your current level of self-esteem?
3. Can you recall a specific time when you thought someone was giving you feedback that was overly positive, possibly in an attempt to make you feel better about yourself? How effective was it? Did it actually boost your self-esteem? If not, what effect did it have?
4. Identify at least one area in which you have high self-efficacy and another in which you have lower self-efficacy. What is one specific thing you could do to improve your self-efficacy in your low area?

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Developing Self-Knowledge

1. Consider the feedback you have recently received from others, either in your personal life or at work. Are you aware of any distorted or obsolete information that you may not have noticed at the time? If so, do you need to modify your self-concept to compensate for the distortion?

Self-Preservation: How (And How Much) We Show Ourselves to Others

1. What reasons can you think of that might explain the relationship between age and self-monitoring?

The Self Throughout Adulthood

1. What ways can you think of for an adult without children to make positive contributions to the next generation?
2. Think about your own generation as a cohort. What cultural or societal events or conditions have been influential in your overall worldviews, beliefs, and ideals as a cohort? What is your prediction about how these forces will influence the choices and direction your cohort makes as you collectively progress through your lifespan?
3. As you read about these stages of Sheehy's model, do you notice any similarities to Levinson's model? Explain.

Class Activities

<u>Understanding the Relationship Between Self-Esteem, Self-Concept, and Self-Efficacy (Handout 2.7)</u>

Early studies by Bandura and colleagues focused on self-efficacy in the therapeutic contexts, such as investigating training methods to enhance patient self-efficacy and coping (Bandura & Adams, 1977). In the 1980s, self-efficacy pertaining to academic performance began to be investigated.

- Ask students to review the information on self-esteem and self-concept. Hamilton contends that self-efficacy is the intersection between these two concepts.
- Using this information as a base, assign a 2-4 page paper on the relationship between self-efficacy and school performance. The paper should include a minimum of four current references (no citations earlier than 2000) from referred journals.
- Paper guidelines
    - **Introduction:** Statement of the purpose of the paper and identification of the specific topic chosen to address should be included in this section.
    - **Body:** Two to four sections should clearly define and separate main points presented.
    - **Conclusion:** A summary should highlight the key points and present a conclusion.
    - **References:** All sources should be referenced in the body of the paper and in a separate section at the end of the paper. Specify the writing style used by your department, college, or profession.

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- Assign students to small groups to share their papers and answer the following questions:
    - How were self-esteem, self-concept, and self-efficacy defined? Did everyone define these in the same way? If not, how did the definitions differ?
    - What specific topics were addressed by each member of the group?
    - What did individual members of the group find about self-efficacy? Were all the findings the same? If so, explain the similarities. If not, how did the findings differ?
    - What resources were used to support the paper?
    - Ask students to decide, as a group, the three most important points discovered about self-efficacy. These may be recorded and presented to the larger class.

A Chip Off the Old Block (Handout 2.7)

A quick, entertaining, and enlightening activity for helping students reflect on self-concept can be undertaken by asking the class to collect a rock (or pebble) that best represents them. Chuckles often result when students are asked to assemble their group rock portraits.

- Set the ground rules for exercise by determining what kind, size (e.g., pebble vs. boulder), and general condition of the materials to be collected.
- Ask students to think about the kind of rock they will need to find to best representation of themselves in a group portrait. When they come to class, instruct students to write a description of themselves as represented by the rock or pebble they found. Their description should be short, concise, and written on a small index card.
- In small groups, provide students with adhesive to assemble their rock portraits and display their descriptions. Before the rocks are grouped together, individual rocks should be numbered or lettered, but no names should be used.
- After all groups are finished (and you can expect lots of jokes and giggling), provide a sheet of lined paper for every member in the class. Allow class members to inspect each assembled group portrait and try to identify the class members in each group. In addition to indicating their guess for which numbered rock or pebble represents a classmate, you can also ask them to provide a rationale for their choice.
- At the end of the exercise, provide the correct identification within each group and award a small prize to the student or students who correctly identify the most classmates.
- End the activity with a discussion about how students see themselves and how they are seen by others.

Class Activities Within the Text

Activity 2.1: The Twenty Statements Test

Before beginning the chapter, students are asked to complete 20 questions to assess their sense of self. Handout 2.1 is a hard copy of the form.

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Activity 2.2: Self-Esteem and Its Influence on Your Relationships
This activity is designed to help students reflect on self-esteem and the factors that help to develop it.

Activity 2.3: Free Association and the Unknown

- Part 1 of this exercise asks students to free associate with a list of 18 words. Handout 2.4/Part 1 is a hard copy of the form.
- Part 2 of this activity helps students to identify themes within their associations and to share with a classmate if their comfort level permits. Handout 2.4/Part 2 is a hard copy of the form.
- Part 3 of the Free Association and the Unknown exercise is used to help students identify and list feelings and thoughts about any new self-discoveries made during the exercise. Handout 2.4/Part 3 contains a hard copy of the form.

Activity 2.4: Self-Monitoring Questionnaire
This activity is designed to help students identify specific behaviors related directly to physical demeanor and to reflect on these as they relate to self-monitoring. Handout 2.5 is a hard copy of this form.

Activity 2.5: Life Stages and the Adults in Your Life
Students are asked to identify four adults of different ages and determine what life stage each is in. Handout 2.6 is a hard copy of the form.

Handouts

Handout 2.1 (Activity 2.1) The Twenty Statements Test
Handout 2.2 Ego Boosters and Ego Busters in Your Life
Handout 2.3 Improving Self-Knowledge through Social Comparison
Handout 2.4 (Activity 2.3) Free Association and the Unknown
Handout 2.5 (Activity 2.4) True/False Exercise
Handout 2.6 (Activity 2.5) Life Stages and the Adults in Your Life
Handout 2.7 Understanding the Relationship Between Self-Esteem, Self-Concept, and Self-Efficacy
Handout 2.8 A Chip Off the Old Block

NAME:_____ DATE:_____

HANDOUT 2.1: THE TWENTY STATEMENTS TEST

INSTRUCTIONS: *Fill in the spaces with 20 different words or phrases you would use to complete the statement. If you get stuck, consider your traits, relationships, roles, jobs, hobbies, values, strengths, and weaknesses.*
1. I am _____.

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2. I am _____.
3. I am _____.
4. I am _____.
5. I am _____.
6. I am _____.
7. I am _____.
8. I am _____.
9. I am _____.
10. I am _____.
11. I am _____.
12. I am _____.
13. I am _____.
14. I am _____.
15. I am _____.
16. I am _____.
17. I am _____.
18. I am _____.
19. I am _____.
20. I am _____.

REFLECTIONS

A. How difficult was it to fill in all 20 spaces? At what point did you start to have trouble?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

B. Randomly choose three numbers between 1 and 20, and then cross off the words above that correspond to those numbers. Now, imagine you do not possess those qualities. Imagine how that might come about, and how it would affect you. Write your thoughts and reactions to that in the following space.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

NAME: _____ DATE:_____

HANDOUT 2.2: EGO BOOSTERS AND EGO BUSTERS IN YOUR LIFE

PART 1: INTROSPECTION

A. Think of a recent "ego boosting" message you received from someone you love or respect. What was it? How and why did it affect your self-esteem? Do you think the other person was aware of its effect on you?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

B. Think of a recent "ego busting" message you received from someone you love or respect. What was it? How and why did it affect your self-esteem? Do you think the other person was aware of its effect on you?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

PART 2: INTERVIEW AND ANALYZE

A. Talk to a close friend, work colleague, or loved one and ask him or her to tell you of a recent "ego booster" message he or she received from you. In the following space, summarize the message. Then, consider whether you gave the message deliberately. Were you aware of its effects on the other person? How do you feel now that you know the effects?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

B. Talk to a close friend, work colleague, or loved one and ask him or her to tell you of a recent "ego buster" message he or she received from you. In the following space, summarize it.

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Then, consider whether you gave the message deliberately. Were you aware of its effects on the other person? How do you feel now that you know the effects?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

PART 3: FUTURE APPLICATIONS

In the following space, reflect on what you have learned from this activity. In the future, what, if any, changes will you make in your human relations based on what you have learned in this activity?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Source: Adapted from Adler & Towne, 1996.

NAME:_____ DATE:_____

HANDOUT 2.3: IMPROVING SELF-KNOWLEDGE THROUGH SOCIAL COMPARISON

GOAL: *To consider the accuracy of your self-concept by comparing yourself to similar others in terms of each descriptor.*

PART 1: YOUR SELF-CONCEPT

Begin by referring back to Activity 2.1 and identifying the five most important aspects of your self-concept. Write them here.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

PART 2: SOCIAL COMPARISON

In the first blank space of each item, write in the word you chose in part 1 that corresponds to each number. For example, in part 1, if you chose the word "athletic" for the first word of your self-concept, write that word in comparison 1. Then go on to test out the accuracy of each aspect of your self-concept by comparing yourself to other people you know well: the second blank space of each item should name the person to whom you are comparing yourself, and the third blank space should describe what you notice in that comparison.

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1. I think that I am _____. As I compare myself to _____ on this characteristic, I notice _____ _____ _____.
Based on this comparison, I can conclude that my self-awareness in terms of this characteristic is *as accurate/not as accurate* (circle one) as I thought it was.

2. I think that I am _____. As I compare myself to _____ on this characteristic, I notice _____ _____ _____
Based on this comparison, I can conclude that my self-awareness in terms of this characteristic is *as accurate/not as accurate* (circle one) as I thought it was.

3. I think that I am _____. As I compare myself to _____ on this characteristic, I notice _____ _____ _____.
Based on this comparison, I can conclude that my self-awareness in terms of this characteristic is *as accurate/not as accurate* (circle one) as I thought it was.

4. I think that I am _____. As I compare myself to _____ on this characteristic, I notice _____ _____ _____.
Based on this comparison, I can conclude that my self-awareness in terms of this characteristic is *as accurate/not as accurate* (circle one) as I thought it was.

5. I think that I am _____. As I compare myself to _____ on this characteristic, I notice _____ _____ _____.
Based on this comparison, I can conclude that my self-awareness in terms of this characteristic is *as accurate/not as accurate* (circle one) as I thought it was.

PART 3: CONCLUSIONS

In the following space, write your reflections on what you have learned about the accuracy of your self-concept. Also, describe one way in which you can use your new insight(s) to improve your relations with others.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

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_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

NAME:_____ DATE:_____

HANDOUT 2.4: FREE ASSOCIATION AND THE UNKNOWN

PART 1: FREE ASSOCIATION

Following is a list of 18 words. As you read each word, write down the first word that comes to mind in the space next to the word.

Tool _____
Color _____
Human _____
Food _____
Fruit _____
God or goddess _____
Retreat _____
Geographic location _____
Hero or heroine _____
Season of the year _____
Musical instrument _____
Weapon _____
Vacation _____
Legendary figure _____
Animal _____
Article of clothing _____
Piece of furniture _____
Protect _____

PART 2: INTROSPECTION AND FEEDBACK

Study the words you wrote. What themes are apparent in your responses? Do you notice anything that indicates something about yourself that you weren't aware of, such as a goal, fear, or value? If you are comfortable showing your responses to others, let someone else (or a few other people) look at your responses, and see if they notice any themes.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

PART 3: CONCLUSIONS

In the following space, write the themes that you or others noticed in your responses. Describe your feelings and thoughts about anything new you discovered about yourself by doing this exercise.

_____
_____
_____
_____

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_____
_____
_____
_____

Source: Reaching out: Interpersonal Effectiveness and Self-Actualization, by D.W. Johnson, 1997, Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

NAME:_____ DATE:_____

HANDOUT 2.5: TRUE/FALSE EXERCISE

INSTRUCTIONS: *For each of the following questions, answer* True *or* False.

1. I find it hard to imitate the behavior of other people.
2. At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like.
3. I can only argue for ideas that I already believe.
4. I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information.
5. I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain others.
6. I would probably make a good actor.
7. In a group of people, I am rarely the center of attention.
8. In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different person.
9. I am not particularly good at making other people like me.
10. I'm not always the person I appear to be.
11. I would not change my opinions (or the way I do things) to please someone or win their favor.
12. I have considered being an entertainer.
13. I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting.
14. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations.
15. At a party, I let others keep the jokes and stories going.
16. I feel a bit awkward in company and do not act as well as I should.
17. I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if for a good reason).
18. I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them.

Scoring: Give yourself 1 point for each *True* answer you gave for items 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 17, and 18. Then, give yourself 1 point for each *False* answer you gave for items 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, and 16. Add up your total number of points. This total represents your self-monitoring score. The average score for a North American college student is between 10 and 11.

My score is _____.

Reflections: (Complete this section only after finishing the section on public and private selves.) Based on this activity and what you have learned about self-monitoring,

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how satisfied are you with your level of self-monitoring? What changes, if any, will you make in your self-monitoring behavior based on what you have learned?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Source: Snyder and Gangestad (1986). On the nature of self-monitoring: Matters of assessment, matters of validity, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.* Copyright © 1986 by the American Psychological Association. Reproduced with permission.

NAME:_____ DATE:_____

HANDOUT 2.6: LIFE STAGES AND THE ADULTS IN YOUR LIFE

INSTRUCTIONS: *Choose four adults in your life who are at least 10 years apart from each other in age (you may include yourself, if you wish). Then consider which life stage theory best explains each adult. Give some examples to support your ideas.*

Person #1: Name _____
In the following space, answer these questions:

- What seem to be the main themes in this person's interests, goals, and behavior at this stage in his or her life?

_____
_____

- What life stage theory seems to best fit this person? Give some examples that support your belief.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Person #2: Name _____
In the following space, answer these questions:

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- What seem to be the main themes in this person's interests, goals, and behavior at this stage in his or her life?

  _____
  _____

- What life stage theory seems to best fit this person? Give some examples that support your belief.

  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

Person #3: Name _____
In the following space, answer these questions:

- What seem to be the main themes in this person's interests, goals, and behavior at this stage in his or her life?

  _____
  _____
  _____

- What life stage theory seems to best fit this person? Give some examples that support your belief.

  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____
  _____

Person #4: Name _____
In the following space, answer these questions:

- What seem to be the main themes in this person's interests, goals, and behavior at this stage in his or her life?

  _____
  _____
  _____

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■ What life stage theory seems to best fit this person? Give some examples that support your belief.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

NAME;_____ DATE:_____

HANDOUT 2.7: UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-ESTEEM, SELF-CONCEPT, AND SELF-EFFICACY

Early studies by Bandura and colleagues focused on self-efficacy in the therapeutic contexts, such as investigating training methods to enhance patient self-efficacy and coping (Bandura & Adams, 1977). In the 1980s self-efficacy pertaining to academic performance began to be investigated.

- Review the information on self-esteem and self-concept. Hamilton contends that self-efficacy is the intersection between these two concepts.
- Using this information as a base, write a 2-4 page paper on the relationship between self-efficacy and school performance. The paper should include a minimum of four current references (no citations earlier than 2000) from referred journals.
- Paper guidelines
    - **Introduction:** Statement of the purpose of the paper and identification of the specific topic chosen to address should be included in this section.
    - **Body:** Two to four sections should clearly define and separate main points presented.
    - **Conclusion:** A summary should highlight the key points and present a conclusion.
    - **References:** All sources should be referenced in the body of the paper and in a separate section at the end of the paper. Specify the writing style used by your department, college, or profession.
- In small groups, share your paper and answer the following questions:
    - How were self-esteem, self-concept, and self-efficacy defined? Did everyone define these in the same way? If not, how did the definitions differ?
    - What specific topics were addressed by each member of the group?

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- What did individual members of the group find about self-efficacy? Were all the findings the same? If so, explain the similarities. If not, how did the findings differ?
- What resources were used to support the paper?
- Decide, as a group, the three most important points discovered about self-efficacy. These may be recorded and presented to the larger class.

NAME:_____ DATE:_____

HANDOUT 2.8: A CHIP OFF THE OLD BLOCK

In this assignment, you will be working in small groups to create a group portrait of yourselves.

- With your group, go for a short walk and find a small pebble or rock that looks like you.
- Think about the kind of rock you each will need to find to best represent everyone in a group portrait.
- Bring your pebbles back and write a description of yourself as represented by the rock or pebble you found. Your description should be short, concise, and written on a small index card.
- In small groups, provide students with adhesive to assemble their rock portraits and display their descriptions. Before the rocks are grouped together, individual rocks should be numbered or lettered, but no names should be used.
- After all groups are finished, each portrait will be displayed.
- There will be a contest to see who can correctly identify the most groups and group members.
- Briefly discuss one thing you learned about yourself and your classmates by doing this activity.

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